

Cabletalk

Surrey Hills Gliding Club Newsletter

May 2019

Editor's notes

We have had some good flying days so far but also some pretty awful ones – hopefully the summer is just around the corner. I am delighted that we have some new contributors for this issue of Cabletalk – if you are going away or have a story to tell then please consider writing an article for the next issue.

Cabletalk is sent to all the current members but it is also sent to ex-members and people who have expressed an interest in receiving it. The total mailing list is over 200 so your story may encourage others to join or rejoin SHGC after reading it.

I came across this on a friend's Facebook page (wife of a member) and have changed a few bits so it fits for SHGC:

We are only volunteers – we are not experts (well apart from Steve of course!) – we are your next-door neighbours – we are not perfect, we are people just like you. We don't have any more spare time or energy than you do, a lot of us work full time and juggle our families and schedules but we try to keep it all together as best we can. The only difference is that we believe passionately about gliding and in particular what Surrey Hills GC has to offer but, without volunteers, we would not be able to operate.

Please put your name on the roster whenever you can as we only survive because people volunteer.

Cafe Solo Anyone?

Terry Hagerty (with L plates)

Thursday 28/3/19 will be a day to remember. My wife Emy went shopping in Kingston-upon-Thames and that was unusual, she normally goes on a Monday! Sun shone and I dressed in Harris Tweed and cravat before leaving for Kenley aerodrome.

I was Duty Pilot (rare these days as so many others usually want to be in on the act)! and Steve told Richard and me that, since there were no voucher guests to fly, it was an 'easy day'. I believed him.

A few people turned up and the day started predictably enough. Several people were court-martialed by Steve and that was before we started flying. As I say, a normal day.

A virtually windless morning with Spring in the air. A red kite flew around only a few feet AGL, the first I had seen close-up. He glanced my way with a knowing look ...

Around midday Richard asked me what I wanted to do in the Grob. 'Stay in' I was tempted to reply, but said I needed more practice with launch failures – 'not really the right day for it', declared Richard, 'but of course they can happen anytime so we'll see'.

He pulled the cable on my first launch fairly high up and I recovered well but was sluggish in turning to decide my options. The rest went well. My second flight was



Richard congratulates Terry after his first solo. Photo Steve Codd

pretty much fine all round. Walking back with the Grob, Richard asked me if I thought I could do all that again on my own. My stomach lurched, my head thumped, and my cravat stopped blowing in the breeze. 'Er, yes, I think so' I replied. My first thought? I really hope Steve is hammering away at some metal object in the hangar and not watching. Phil was briefed by Richard that I was to fly alone and I did my pre-flight checks plus a quick text to my wife to remind her where we kept our wills.

I had already decided to ignore all thermals (most of you know how good I am usually at staying up) but did circle around a little just to relax – and I really DID talk to myself as instructed. My 'arrival' on the ground was pretty poor. A

bit of Pilot Induced Oscillation I think. I now know that I prefer Pilot Induced Osculation.

Up I went again and this time, all went according to plan, including the approach and landing. Happy days.

A large number of club members had gathered at the Launch Point, and there were about 20 members of the public all cheering from the peri-track as I returned. The man with the two large dogs leaped over the fence to congratulate me, and the dogs were given a treat and a bowl of water by Steve.

Enough of the jokes already!

I now need to learn to fly properly and safely. This is the beginning, not the end and if anybody sees me smiling too much

or sounding in any way chipper, you have my permission to let down my car's tyres. I will speak to Paul about his starting a new set of evening talks called 'Bronze and Before'.

In the meantime I would like to say a huge thank you to Steve, Richard, Paul, Phil, Bruce, Barney, and everyone else who has helped along the way to make my day. My regards also go to Steve Plaice whom I've known for many years, and without whom, I would not be writing this.

The Real Reason Behind ...

Steve Plaice

Not my real name of course but for reasons which I can now reveal, I had to work 'under the radar' for some while whilst ostensibly being a member of the Surrey Hills Gliding Club.

All that time when most of you probably thought that I was taking an inordinate amount of time to gain solo flying status, I was actually working under cover for the Aeronautical Regional Safety Executive, based, as you might guess, in Brussels.

Believe me, I had to be careful that my cover wasn't blown many times. There were several occasions when I inadvertently displayed too much knowledge when asking 'innocent' questions of the instructors and had to quickly backtrack in an attempt to persuade them that I really didn't know much. For example I asked Steve Codd very early on if DIs were done every day. I was told the clue was in the title. This is but one example of how we inspectors strive to keep our cover while working under pressure at gliding clubs.

Anyway my time under cover is now at an end and I'm about to complete my full report for the A.R.S.E shortly. I am

authorised to provide the Club with some advance content of the report and am happy to let you know that, by and large, I found most of what I inspected to be **Good to Very Good**.

The following relatively unimportant criticisms perhaps need to be reviewed by your Committee. They are mostly aimed at the instructors and I have decided not to name individuals but simply to make the following generic remarks:

When observing some instructors either coaching pre-solo pilots or flying temporary members I would not recommend the use of such remarks as:

During pre-take-off checks

'Straps – mine are secure, Instruments – yes I've got some.'

'I will just sit in the back and make a few phone calls.'

'You are Duty Pilot aren't you? Would you kindly move that rain puddle slightly to the left before I launch.'

'Ballast. Yes I'm in.'

Sundry

The dog situation is not ideal and I worry that this might not have been spotted by your members.

When time permits, perhaps a gentle reminder to the public about airfield security and incursions might be appropriate.

I liked the coffee, not so much the tea.

A full report will be lodged with your Chairman within 28 days.

May I take this opportunity to thank you all for your skill, attention to detail, and friendliness during my long period with you and wish you all the best for the future.

In the spirit of confidentiality may I ask that you do not warn other gliding clubs of my visit to you as I am now in the process of planning my next inspection.

Best Regards, SP

My trip to Austria

Don Porter

Originally I had planned a week's break with my fiancé to sightsee and get to know more about Austria.

Little did she know I had also planned to glide in the Alps during our trip away. She soon found out and officially became a Gliding Widow.

Initially I had contacted Innsbrucker Segelflieger Vereinigung Gliding School who responded quite quickly and offered to take me in one of their Duo Discus gliders.

All had been arranged and confirmed given the forecast conditions.

The cost was €100.00, which included an aerotow launch from Innsbruck International Airport (which sounded fantastic being alongside the commercial aircrafts).

On the day of my flight I made my way down to the airport, went through security and had my Surrey Hills jumper ready and my log book.

I was kindly greeted by my pilot who was called Jakob. After chatting with Jakob he advised that he is a 21-year-old student studying chemistry, has been flying since he was 16-years-old, currently holds two Diamonds, one Gold and is currently a BI.



He is also undergoing his CFI training. So, to say the least I felt safe!

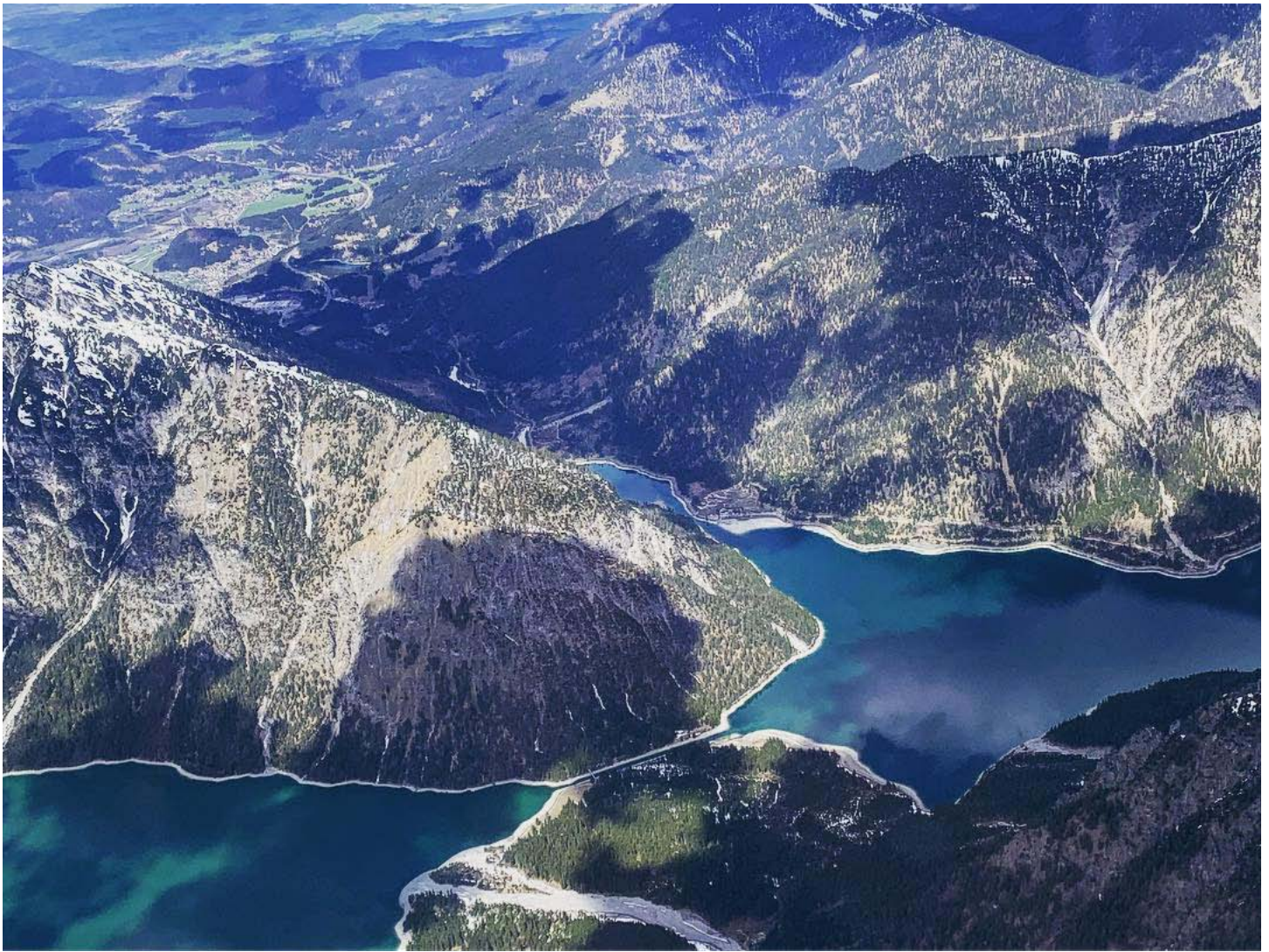
We had an initial brief of what the plan was and the route we would take as well as some of the dangers we could encounter.

For the first time ever I was asked to sit in the back of the Duo Discus which was a new experience for me.

We then launched via aerotow up to 3,000 feet and then headed straight for a mountain. After reaching this mountain we got 5 up on the variometer and we managed to thermal up to 6,000 feet (incredible).

After reaching 6,000 feet we then soared north heading towards the glaciers and then managed to find more lift, at this point I took full control and managed to climb up to 8,000 feet.





After soaring in between the mountains and along the snowy mountains, we continued to gain height in a straight line flying at 110 knots (wings level of course). We then encountered more lift along the ridge and climbed to 10,000 feet and flew over a few lakes in Switzerland.

We managed to maintain height and find more lift and managed to achieve cloud base which was 11,163 feet (without any oxygen). As you can imagine this was record breaking for me and flying at that altitude was truly unforgettable.

We could have flown longer but I had to think of my fiancé which cut our time short.

Overall the flight was 3 hours and 10 minutes, flew 273.15 km across Swiss, German and Italian borders.

A truly incredible experience (for €100.00), such a warm club which I highly recommend.

Their fleet also consisted of K6s, K8s, Pirats and LS4s.

Peter Wall – 08/03/1939 – 30/03/2019

Charlotte Clout (daughter)

Peter James Wall died on 30 March 2019 shortly after his 80th birthday on 8 March. He lived in Stafford Road in Caterham for over 35 years and the area and Surrey Hills Gliding Club will always have a special place in his heart. He was born in Bexleyheath to Wilfred and



Phyllis Wall and is survived by his two children Charlotte and James and grandchildren Alex, Harry, Oliver and Julian. He loved his family and always remained close friends with his first wife Anna Wood who always supported his love of flying. He was a passionate horse rider and skier who loved the countryside, to travel and outdoor life. He had been retired for 30 years from Iveco Ford where he worked as a senior technical engineer.

Peter's funeral was on 14 May 2019 and his family have chosen to support Kent Air Ambulance as this was his favourite charity, the link to the JustGiving page is www.justgiving/fundraising/peterjameswall

My first 300km – 12 May 2019

Andrew Woolley

'If you're going to fly a 300km task you should have started an hour ago' said

Richard Fitch, helpfully, as Marc Corrance hurriedly reset my task on the Oudie. This had initially been set up as Shobdon – Mynd North – Silverstone – Shobdon. However, following advice from the local pilots about the busy circuit at the airfield, we decided that a remote start and finish would be more sensible. My task was changed to Shobdon North West – Mynd North – Silverstone – Shobdon North West, which, if completed would qualify for Gold Distance and Diamond Goal. Richard then suggested that if I managed to reach the first turning point I should look at the time and take a decision on whether to continue with the task or return to base.

I took off in Discus AC at 13:25, released from the tow at 2,300ft and almost immediately found a strong blue thermal that took me to 5,500ft amsl. I turned back to Shobdon to cross the start line and then set off for Mynd North, some 38km to the North. The sky ahead was mostly blue but I found 3 more climbs and arrived at the turning point at 14:14 with 270km to run to the finish. Should I or shouldn't I? There were good looking banks of cumulus to the East so I thought I should take the chance and turned for Silverstone.

The next 140km were fairly uneventful with good regular thermals and I managed to keep above 3,000ft most of the way. I

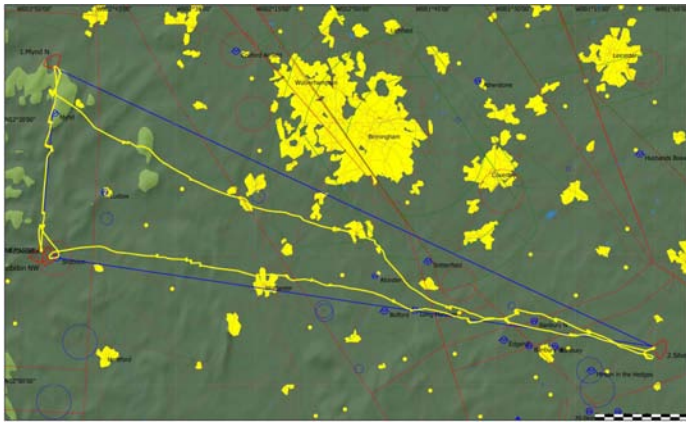




had to route to the south around Wellesbourne ATZ and then had to keep below 4,500ft for a bit to avoid Daventry CTA and then I could see Silverstone Race Circuit in the distance. I think I got turning point fixation at this point and I arrived at Silverstone at only 1,200ft (about 900ft agl!) with no sign of a decent thermal. I knew that Silverstone has a lot of large grass fields around it that are used as car parks for the Grand Prix, so I figured that one of these would be a good landing field. I'd picked out my field and was just about to put the wheel down on the downwind leg when I ran into a very strong thermal that took me up to 5,600ft in just 9 minutes (4.9 knot average). The

vario was showing over 9 knots up some of the time! I thanked the gods, got around the turning point and then set off at 16:33 to complete the remaining 130km to Shobdon.

I now had a tailwind and progress was good. I was finding quite a lot of lift in a straight line, which reduced the need for circling to gain height. Those thermals that I stopped to circle in were very strong and I reached 5,800ft at the end of the best one, which meant that I had to then dive at speed to avoid breaching Daventry CTA at 5,500ft. Passing Worcester at 5,000ft things were starting to look good but I was worried about the day dying so I pressed on as fast as I dared. I took three more climbs and then I was on final glide at 3,600ft with 25km to go. My bladder was now rather full so the last 12km was flown at 90 knots in a bid to land before I wet myself. As I approached the airfield I heard Marc on the radio saying something about Shobdon North West but I couldn't hear the whole message. I asked him to repeat but didn't hear any more and so I went ahead and landed as quickly as I



could, finally touching down at 6:26, just over 5 hours since I had taken off. I immediately jumped out and relieved myself on the airfield! Marc came up to ask if I had crossed the Shobdon North West finish line. So that's what he was trying to tell me! I confessed that I hadn't and we then realised that, when the task was changed, Shobdon North West had not been entered on the Oudie as the finish. The finish had been left as Shobdon airfield! Fortunately, although I hadn't completed the intended triangle, I had at least flown a distance of 307km.



What you have to do when your starter motor goes in the middle of the night. Thankfully Jon got a jump start from Philip Skinner.

The result of this was that the BGA accepted my claim for the Gold Distance but not for the Diamond Goal. That was annoying as it would have been so easy to complete the Diamond Goal if I had just flown the extra few kilometres, though I'd probably have wet myself in the process. Never mind, I got the Gold and can try for the Diamond another time. Finally, I need to thank Richard, Marc, Philip and Jonathan for their support and company during our very enjoyable 4 days flying.

Contact Details

The Directors of the Club are:
Jill Oake
Jason Barton

The Club Committee is made up of:
Chris Leggett (Chairman)
Marc Corrance (Secretary)
Stephen Skinner
Trevor Fielder
Terry Hagerty

Reporting to the Committee are:
Richard Fitch (CFI)
Steve Codd (Club Manager)
Mark Kidd (Treasurer)
Paul Hayward (Safety Officer)

You can contact any member of the team through the club at:

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Comments on this newsletter and any contributions or photographs are welcomed and should be sent to the 'Cabletalk Editor' at the above email address.